



# **Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks**

## **MONTANA WOLF PROGRAM WEEKLY REPORT**

To: Interested Parties

From: FWP Wolf Program Coordinator, Carolyn Sime (406-461-0587)

Subject: Wolf Program Activities and Related Information, November 21 - 27, 2009

Contributors to the Montana Wolf Weekly are Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP), Universities, USDA Wildlife Services (WS), the National Park Service (NPS; Glacier NP; Yellowstone National Park will be reported in the Wyoming Wolf Weekly), US Forest Service, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and the Blackfeet Nation.

Highlighted activities relate to: monitoring, wolf – livestock interactions, outreach and education, research, law enforcement, and other miscellaneous topics of public interest. The Weekly Report will be available on each Monday, covering the previous week. It and other wolf program information (including the 2008 annual report) can be found at: <http://fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/wolf/default.html>.

### **Wolf Monitoring Activities**

Hunters, other recreationists, and landowners can help FWP monitor the population by reporting wolf observations, tracks, or sign through the FWP online reporting button [Contact Us - Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks](#), by contacting the closest wolf specialist or FWP office, or mailing a wolf observation card.

Flights: None.

### **Wolf - Livestock Activities**

On 11/13, WS killed two wolves from the Miner Lakes pack after confirmed depredations on private land southwest of Wisdom (Big Hole Valley). Also on 11/13, WS replaced a collar on a wolf in the pack. Control work is ongoing for 3 more wolves.

On 11/22, WS confirmed one calf as being killed by wolves on private land west of Wisdom (Big Hole Valley). The calf confirmed on 11/17 as injured during a previous incident is still alive. WS continues with efforts to remove the Battlefield pack. WS also collared and release one wolf in the area on 11/22.

### **Outreach and Education**

Nothing to report at this time.

### **Research Activities**

Nothing to report at this time.

## Law Enforcement and Related Activities

Nothing to report at this time.

## Other Updates

### Northern Rockies Delisting Litigation

On 6/2, a coalition of 13 groups challenged the USFWS delisting decision in Federal District Court in Missoula (9<sup>th</sup> Circuit). On 8/20, a preliminary injunction request was filed, requesting that wolves be placed back on the Endangered Species list while the court decides the main case within the next year – thus preventing a fall hunting season in Montana and Idaho. On 9/8, the injunction request was denied, but the main lawsuit is moving forward. Written briefings by all parties will be completed by late January 2010. A hearing date for oral arguments has not been set, but is expected to be not long after completion of written briefings.

Montana state laws, administrative rules, and the federally-approved management plan remain in effect and wolves are classified and protected under Montana law as a species in need of management. The FWP Commission has the authority to issue rules and regulations regarding the protection and periodic taking of the animal (as through hunting seasons for example). FWP is the lead agency for wolves, assisted by USDA Wildlife Services if wolves are confirmed to have injured or killed livestock.

### Montana 2009 Wolf Hunting Season:

Montana's 2009 wolf hunting season closed one half hour after sunset on Monday 11/16. No additional wolves were lawfully harvested. The final statewide harvest of 72 across three WMUs and during the early backcountry and general seasons is summarized in the table below. A more detailed summary of wolf hunting season will be forthcoming.

<b>As of ½ hour after sunset on 11-16</b>	<b>WMU 1</b> quota: 41 (subquota of 2, N. Fork Flathead)	<b>WMU 2</b> quota: 22	<b>WMU 3</b> quota: 12	<b>STATEWIDE</b> quota: 75
Early Backcountry Season (9-15 to 10-24)	3 wolves	CLOSED	9 wolves; permanently closed on October 9	12
General Fall Season (10-25 to 11-16)	35 (2 in the N. Fork subunit)	21	4	60
Total (each WMU closed at ½ hour after sunset on date shown)	38 (CLOSED on 11-16-09)	21 (CLOSED on 11-16-09)	13 (CLOSED on 10-26-09)	72

### Upcoming FWP Commission meeting:

The FWP Commission will meet on December 10 to tackle a number of proposed 2010-11 hunting season items, including season dates, hunting district boundaries and quota ranges for antelope, bison, bighorn sheep, black bear, deer, elk, moose, mountain goat, mountain lions, and wolves. The meeting will begin at 8:30 in the Old Supreme Court Chambers at the Montana State Capitol. Live audio of the meeting will be steamed via FWP's Web site at [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov) <<http://fwp.mt.gov/>>. Click the live audio button available Dec. 10. Helena Civic Television also will broadcast the meeting on Helena cable channel 11. The agenda is available at [Commission Agendas - Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks](#).

Montana Livestock Loss Reduction & Mitigation Board:

The Board met on October 23. The agenda and minutes from previous meetings are available at [Montana Department of Livestock](#). The program coordinator can be reached at 444-5609.

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To learn more about Montana's wolf population, the Montana program and to help FWP monitor wolves by reporting wolf sign, visit FWP at: [www.fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/wolf](http://www.fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/wolf).

To anonymously report a dead or injured wolf or suspected illegal activity, call: 1-800-TIP-MONT.

To request an investigation of injured or dead livestock, call USDA Wildlife Services directly in western Montana / Helena area at 458-0106 or in eastern Montana at the statewide office: 657-6464. Or, call your nearest FWP representative to have your call referred to Wildlife Services.

If you have a confirmed or probable livestock loss due to wolves, USDA Wildlife Services will supply you with a copy of the Loss Reimbursement Application form. For more information, see <http://liv.mt.gov/liv/LM/index.asp>. Or, contact the Livestock Loss Reduction and Mitigation Program Coordinator George Edwards at the Montana Department of Livestock at 444-5609.